

# PROGRESS UPDATE

## Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

(March 2004 Update)

### Where We Are

- The Army's Chemical Materials Agency will host a public meeting at the South Vermillion High School Cafeteria on **Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>**, beginning at 6 p.m. Representatives of the Army and DuPont Secure Environmental Treatment will be on hand to discuss plans for safely and effectively treating the byproduct of the agent destruction process, a caustic wastewater called hydrolysate.
- The DuPont Secure Environmental Treatment (SET) facility in Deepwater, N.J. is being considered for the treatment of the caustic wastewater from Newport. DuPont is recognized for its unique scientific, technical and safety capabilities. Their facility is a great example of how those capabilities are being applied to real-life needs in the wastewater treatment industry. The SET facility is the largest commercial industrial wastewater treatment facility in North America. It uses a unique DuPont-patented technology to safely and effectively treat numerous and varied chemical waste streams under permits by the U.S. EPA and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. This process has been used for more than 25 years.
- Parsons, the Army's contractor for the VX destruction project at Newport, has not yet awarded a contract to any facility, including DuPont, for the treatment of the caustic wastewater. DuPont does not consider the caustic wastewater from Newport to be significantly different from other wastes that they safely and routinely treat at their SET facility. DuPont has performed a range of treatability studies, as part of their normal business practices, to confirm that they can treat the wastewater safely and effectively without impact on their community, the environment or their employees. An independent peer group reviewed the results and concurs that the hydrolysate can be safely treated at the SET facility. DuPont also conducted a transportation assessment to identify the safest route for transportation. The transportation assessment and other DuPont studies are available for review at the Newport Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office, 140 S. Main Street, Newport, Ind. or Clinton Public Library, 313 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Clinton, Ind. For more information or to view the studies, visit the DuPont Web site at: <http://www.set.dupont.com/dod.html>
- The Newport team has nearly completed systemization of the agent destruction facility. Systemization refers to the process by which testing is performed on each of the facility's operating systems to ensure their safe operation. In order to ensure the NECDF will be ready to begin agent destruction operations in a manner that is protective of the workers, the community and the environment, the following functional groups are tested: equipment preparedness, personnel preparedness, risk preparedness and laboratory preparedness. Activities are on schedule to perform an integrated plant run in mid-April. This process refers to the operation of the agent destruction facility using a simulant, or material that is similar in characteristics to the VX nerve agent without its hazardous properties. The Army anticipates starting destruction of the chemical agent stockpile in Newport in mid-2004.

*For more information, contact the Newport Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office, (765) 492-4445 or toll free 1-(866) 300-9034; the Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Public Affairs Office, (765) 245-4475, or Parsons Public Affairs Outreach, (765) 245-5831.*